Guide to Measures of Student Learning for Administrators and Teachers

2011-2012

Dear Rhode Islanders,

As we work together to transform education in Rhode Island, our highest priority is to ensure that every student has great teachers and that every school has great leadership. Our state's focus on evaluation will provide all educators with high-quality and actionable feedback on their work, which will help them continue to advance their skills every year throughout their careers.

As part of our work, the Rhode Island Department of Education has spent the last year collaborating with educators from all over the state of Rhode Island to consider how exactly we should measure student learning. By including so many voices in the design process, we've created a system that recognizes that schools and classrooms are complex places, and we're pleased to present a system that represents the best thinking from around the state.

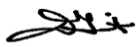
Measuring student learning is challenging because every grade level and subject area is unique, and great educators find different, but creative ways to present material and assess students. One thing that we all agree on is that student learning is the ultimate measure of the success of a teacher, instructional leader, or school district. We want to examine student growth and achievement based on high-quality sources of evidence—not just test scores— to ensure that the results for each teacher are fair, given the unique makeup of their classroom. Truly understanding our students' progress is going to require a new level of collaboration between teachers and school leaders.

Here's how it will work: At the beginning of each school year, teachers and principals will develop clear, attainable goals for their students, based on where they stand academically at the beginning of the school year, and high expectations for what they can achieve over time. We will use assessment results to measure student growth, but also other measures like end-of-course exams and portfolios of student work. We are not interested simply in what percentage of students attain proficiency. At the end of the day, no matter what your subject area or grade level, the question will be: How much did your students learn during the time they were in your classroom or school?

This guide will be an essential tool in ensuring the success of this effort. Every step of the evaluation process is focused on helping educators grow and develop as professionals, for the benefit of our students. Success will require open communication and a renewed spirit of teamwork at every level.

We are committed to helping Rhode Island's educators succeed measuring the growth of their students. I know this work requires dedication and focused energy at the school level. Feedback during the development phase has been invaluable to our work, and we welcome the continued collaboration of our partners in education as we navigate new territory on behalf of Rhode Island's students. Please send comments and suggestions to EdEval@ride.ri.gov.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Educator Evaluation in Rhode Island

Introduction

An effective teacher can change the course of a student's life. Research has shown that teacher quality is the single most important school-based factor influencing student achievement[1], so naturally, a top priority for school leaders should be giving teachers the guidance and support they need to be successful. In addition, we must ensure that every school has an effective school leader who supports teachers in driving student achievement gains. A fair and accurate evaluation system is our best tool for developing and improving the effectiveness of our educators, while also recognizing the outstanding performance of our most effective teachers and leaders.

Background

In 2009, the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education adopted the Rhode Island Educator Evaluation System Standards, which are designed to help school districts build rigorous, fair, and accurate educator evaluation systems. These standards were guided by research, recommendations from the Consortium for Policy Research in Education, and the Rhode Island Urban Education Task Force. The standards state that an evaluation system must:

- Establish a common understanding of expectations for educator quality within the district;
- Emphasize the professional growth and continuous improvement of individual educators;
- Create an organizational approach to the collective professional growth and continuous improvement of groups of educators to support district goals;
- Provide quality assurance for the performance of all district educators;
- Assure fair, accurate, and consistent evaluations; and
- Provide district educators a role in guiding the ongoing system development in response to systematic feedback and changing district needs.

Using these six standards as a foundation, along with the Basic Education Plan, which requires that student learning be the primary reference point for evaluation, educators from across the state have worked together to design improved evaluation systems.

[1] Sanders, W.L. and Rivers, J.C. (1996). "Research Project Report: Cumulative and Residual Effects of Teachers on Future Student Academic Achievement," University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.

Design of the Measures of Student Learning

To ensure that measures of student learning reflect a common vision of educator quality throughout the state, a working group of teachers convened for several months in the fall of 2010 to design this approach. During development, content was reviewed by the Advisory Committee for Educator Evaluation Systems (ACEES), a committee comprised of parents, students and educators from around the state charged with advising RIDE on the design of the RI Model, as well as a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of national education and assessment experts.

Student Learning Objectives were field tested in five Rhode Island schools during the spring of 2011. This process led to further refinements based on feedback from teachers and building administrators. The practice of using Student Learning Objectives dovetails with and enhances other initiatives in Rhode Island, such as the shift toward using Common Core State Standards. Standards, such as these, can be incorporated into Student Learning Objectives with ease. The practice of writing Student Learning Objectives also complements other activities, such as creating instructional objectives for a unit of study.

Timeline for Implementation

In most districts, the Rhode Island Model will be implemented gradually beginning in school year 2011-2012. Some early adopter districts will begin immediately with full implementation. In school year 2012-2013, districts will implement the full version of the Rhode Island Model, which will incorporate lessons learned from the first year of implementation. Even beyond these initial years, the Model will be continuously improved based on educators' feedback and experience.

Gradual Implementation districts will engage in measuring Student Learning during the first year of implementation, but with fewer required Student Learning Objectives. This approach will enable educators to acclimate to the new evaluation model, before final evaluation ratings carry more weight.

The following chart identifies the specific **gradual implementation** requirements for both teachers and building administrators:

Component	Teachers	Building Administrators
Student Learning Objectives	At least 2 (per teacher) set by October	At least 2 (per administrator) set by October
RI Growth Model Rating	Not applicable in 2011-12	Not applicable in 2011-12

The following chart identifies the specific **full implementation** requirements for both teachers and building administrators:

Component	Teachers	Building Administrators
Student Learning Objectives	At least 2-4 (per teacher)	At least 4-6 (per administrator)
RI Growth Model Rating	Ratings assigned in 2012-2013 school year	Ratings assigned in 2012-2013 school year

Using Multiple Measures

Evaluating educators using multiple measures of student learning is part of an effort to provide a fair and accurate measure of educator effectiveness. Effectiveness ratings are never determined based on a single assessment or source of evidence. The inclusion of both the Rhode Island Growth Model and Student Learning Objectives allows us to begin to broaden the sources of evidence used to measure student learning for the purposes of evaluation and establish comparability for educators in their evaluations, in both tested and non-tested subjects.

Measures of Student Learning

Across the country, effective teachers and school leaders plan for student growth and measure progress. They review state and national standards, measure students' starting points, give assessments aligned to those standards, and measure how much their students learn during the school year. These educators set learning goals for their students and use assessments to measure their progress toward these goals, adjusting their instruction accordingly along the way as data become available. Having these goals and assessments in place allows them to plan backward and create a roadmap to success, ensuring that every minute of instruction is moving the class and the school toward a common vision of achievement. This process of setting goals, monitoring progress and assessing learning are central to educator evaluation in Rhode Island.

In all Rhode Island educator evaluation models, student Learning will be measured in two ways: through Student Learning Objectives and by the Rhode Island Growth Model (RIGM). Every educator will have Student Learning Objectives, which are specific, measurable goals for their students' learning. Teachers will set 2-4 Student Learning Objectives and building administrators (within the same building) will share the same set of 4-6 Student Learning Objectives.

Starting in the 2012-2013 school year, teachers who are responsible for student learning in ELA and mathematics in grades 3 through 7 and building administrators in schools with students in grades 3-7 will also receive a rating based on students' growth on NECAP ELA and mathematics tests. Students' growth will be calculated by comparing students with similar score histories. For more information on the RIGM, go to http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/RIGM.aspx.

Student Learning Objectives

Effective teachers in Rhode Island are already setting standards-aligned learning goals for their students. Teachers are planning backward to align their daily and weekly instruction with their long-term goals, using valid and rigorous assessments on an ongoing basis to measure student progress toward their goals, and instructing their students, informed by the goals, plans, and assessments.

A Student Learning Objective is a long-term (typically one semester or one school year) academic goal that teachers and administrators set for groups of students. It must be specific and measureable, based on available prior student learning data, and aligned to state standards,[2] as well as any school and district priorities. Student Learning Objectives should represent the most important learning during an interval of instruction and may be based on **progress**, **mastery** or a **combination of the two**. Objectives based on **progress** require students to make a certain amount of progress from a baseline measure toward a clear benchmark of performance (e.g. all students will move up 3 reading levels within one year). Objectives based on **mastery** require students to demonstrate a particular level of skill and knowledge in that specific course content, regardless of any baseline measures (e.g. all students will be reading level W texts by the end of the year).

[2] For courses where state standards do not exist, Student Learning Objectives should align to other recognized standards (e.g., standards from content groups like the National Council of Teacher of Mathematics).

Evaluators will work with teams of teachers and administrators to develop a set of Student Learning Objectives for each grade level, course, or school. All teachers of the same course in the same school should use the same set of objectives, although specific targets may vary if student starting points differ significantly between classes. For more information on setting targets, refer to the teacher guidance on page 39. While teachers are responsible for 2-4 Student Learning Objectives, a teacher may add additional objectives if he or she is responsible for more than four content areas/grade levels. The addition of Objectives must be approved by the evaluator. All administrators in the same building will be responsible for one set of school-wide objectives.

The Purpose of Student Learning Objectives

Student Learning Objectives present an opportunity for teachers and administrators to be closely involved in shaping the manner in which their practice is evaluated and the performance of their students is assessed. With the use of Student Learning Objectives, educators work together to determine how content should be prioritized and establish clear expectations for how student learning should be assessed. Student Learning Objectives allow for the use of multiple measures of assessment, including existing off-the-shelf assessments and those that are developed locally by teams of educators. Teachers and administrators will set targets based upon available data for their specific population of students.

Setting, monitoring and attaining Student Learning Objectives requires the purposeful use of data through both formal and informal assessments. This process recognizes and documents academic gains in non-NECAP tested grades and subjects and supplements NECAP scores in tested grades and subjects. Finally, it focuses educators on a collective vision of instruction based on district and school improvement plans and student needs.

For some, setting or evaluating Student Learning Objectives represents a major shift in practice. It will require collaboration and the use of data that might be new and, at first, challenging. However, the result will be more purposeful instruction, closer monitoring of student progress, and, ultimately, greater student achievement. Over time this process will help us establish statewide perspectives on student progress and learning.

Aligning Student Learning Objectives with District and School-Level Goals

Student Learning Objectives are not set by educators in isolation; rather, they are developed by teams of administrators, grade-level teams or groups of content-alike teachers and, are aligned to district and school priorities, wherever possible[3].

[3] Teachers who are the sole teachers for a particular grade and subject combination are encouraged to collaborate with teachers of the same course across the district or with other grades/subjects within the school.

School-wide Student Learning Objectives will set the direction for the entire school throughout the year. School leaders will establish 4-6 Student Learning Objectives that focus on student results in high-priority areas for the district and school. Teachers will be responsible for 2-4 Student Learning Objectives. Teams of school leaders will share the same set of objectives, developed as a team with guidance from their evaluator(s). School leaders will determine objectives that are aligned to the district and/or school's goals or School Improvement Plan and informed by student data from previous years. School leaders are also encouraged to incorporate teacher input into future objectives, and should begin planning them in the spring for the following school year as part of a cyclical process.

Once school-level objectives are finalized and aligned with district priorities, teachers will need to develop objectives that align with the school-level objectives. School leaders will finalize their Student Learning Objectives with their evaluators (district administrators) prior to the start of the school year so that teacher teams can align their Student Learning Objectives to those of the school leaders. For courses where objectives cannot be aligned to school-level objectives, principals will work with teacher teams to develop Student Learning Objectives that complement school priorities.

Processes: Setting and Revising Objectives

Setting Student Learning Objectives

Educators should begin the process by looking at historical data available on current students and priority content standards then both it to set targets for their Student Learning Objectives. Pre-test data and/or assessment data from the prior year can be used to set quantifiable targets.[4] Targets should always be set using the highest quality source of evidence available. For more information on quality of evidence refer to the table on page 18 Targets should be rigorous and attainable for all students, based on the past performance of similar cohorts of students, when taught using best practices from the school, district, or outside the district.

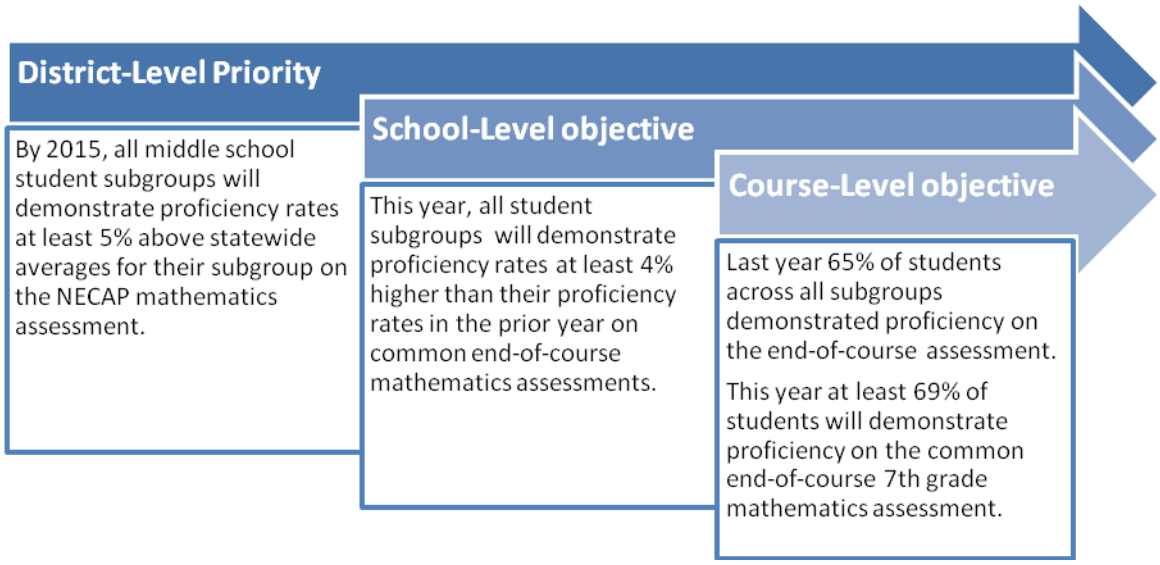
Student Learning Objectives must be able to be scored in time for use in calculating summative evaluation ratings (student results available by the end of May for teachers, by the end of June for building administrators). For this reason, some common assessments that report scores in the summer (e.g. Advanced Placement) may not be used for Student Learning Objectives. However, if past versions of such common assessments are available and can be scored at the school or district level before the end of the year, educators are encouraged to use them as a source of evidence.

Another key element to consider when setting Student Learning Objectives is horizontal and vertical alignment. When a Student Learning Objective is horizontally consistent, all teachers in the same grade-level and/or subject collaborate on shared Student Learning Objectives. Vertically consistent Student Learning Objectives should be consistent with the school administration's school-level goals (for

[4] Several tools are being developed to assist with this process, including an online instructional management system as well as additional interim assessments.

teachers in applicable subject areas and grade levels[5]). School-level objectives, in turn, should be consistent with key district goals and priority metrics and/or the school or district improvement plan.

The graphic below shows an example of vertically-consistent objectives:



A Team Process for Setting Student Learning Objectives

Building administrators' ability to meet their school-level Student Learning Objectives will depend on the quality and rigor of the Student Learning Objectives set by teacher teams, as well as the alignment between the school's big-picture objectives and the teachers' course/content-level objectives. Similarly, superintendents and district leaders' ability to meet district-wide goals will depend on the quality and rigor of the Student Learning Objectives set by teams of administrators at the building level. Teachers and building administrators will benefit from the leadership of their evaluators in setting Student Learning Objectives, especially in the first few years of implementation. Therefore, district priorities and school-level objectives should be easy for educators to access.

Teacher Teams

One of the best ways to ensure teachers' Student Learning Objectives are both aligned to the school-wide Student Learning Objectives and comparable across different classrooms is to effectively use grade level/department teams in the process of setting objectives and determining sources of evidence. All teachers who teach the same course (grade-level and subject combination) should use the same

[5] For instance, if a district has prioritized reading comprehension in grades 5-8, administrators should set a reading objective that supports the district's goal. Teachers of ELA in grade 5-8 would then design a Student Learning Objective that complements the district and school objectives. Teachers of grade and subject combinations without school- and district-level objectives do not need to consider vertical consistency in setting their objectives.

evidence sources for their objectives related to that course. This will promote consistency and fairness for teachers, while ensuring that students across the school are held to the same standards of achievement. Uniform assessments for teachers of the same courses will also save time for teachers and evaluators.

While teachers may set their targets individually, based on the starting points of their students, these targets should be discussed with other teachers of the same courses to ensure consistency of rigor of expectations for students across classes. Where different classes do not have demonstrably different starting points, targets should be the same for each teacher of a course. Teachers who are the sole teachers for a particular grade and subject combination and do not have a team with which to develop Student Learning Objectives are encouraged to collaborate with teachers of the same course across the district or with teachers of other grades/content areas within their school.[6] The evaluator's role is to provide opportunities for grade level/department teams to meet and to ensure that Student Learning Objectives are of uniformly high quality across grade-level and content areas, with rigorous, quantifiable targets set for student performance based on priority content and high-quality sources of evidence.

Administrator Teams

Because all administrators in the same building will share the same set of Student Learning Objectives, it is important that the building's team of school administrators work together to set and monitor all Student Learning Objectives. Toward the end of the school year, as planning begins for the following school year, building administrators should meet to examine progress toward the current year's Student Learning Objectives. Building administrators should work together as a team to review available learning data and begin planning for next year's Student Learning Objectives, ensuring all objectives are aligned to district priorities, school improvement plans, and other accountability measures. Individual targets may need to be adjusted once learning data from the current school year is complete and all school-wide objectives will need to be approved by the superintendent or his/her designee. It is the responsibility of the principal to convene meetings of all building administrators and to make sure objectives are finalized and ready for the superintendent/designee to review and approve before the beginning of the school year.

[6] e.g. If a school has only one P.E. teacher, he or she is encouraged to collaborate on his or her Student Learning Objectives with other P.E. teachers in the district, or even other elective teachers within the school.

Student Learning Objectives: Using Teacher Teams to Set Course-Level Objectives

1. Prior to the start of the year, building administrators share their school-level Student Learning Objectives with their staff and review them in detail with teacher-leaders (department chairs, grade level chairs, etc.).

2. Building administrators identify any district-wide assessments and school-level assessments that must be used to measure student learning, as well as the grade/subjects for which those assessments must be used.

3. School administrators communicate with teacher leaders before the start of the school year about the process for setting Student Learning Objectives and work with them to schedule grade level/department meetings at the very beginning of the school year (preferably before the year starts). If possible, these meetings should be staggered to allow the building administrator (or an assistant principal, if applicable) to attend.

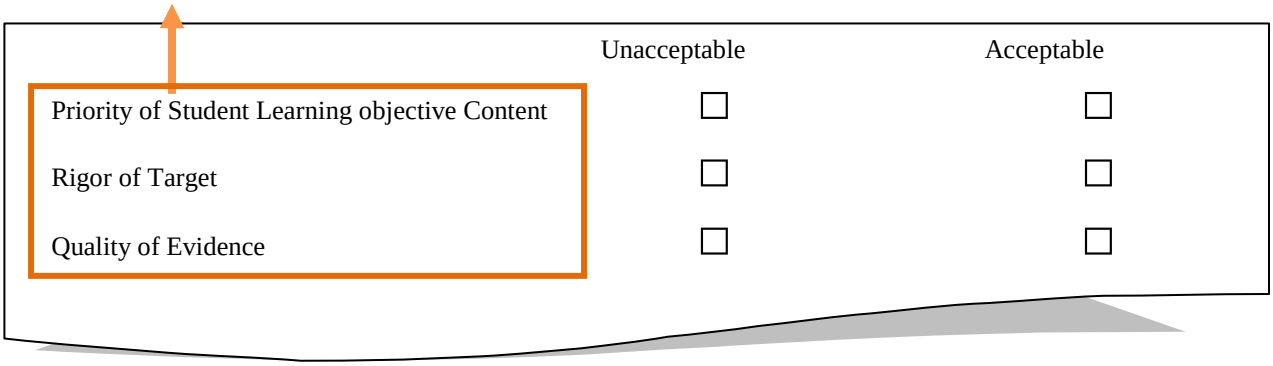
4. The goals of each grade level/department meeting should be to determine:
    a. The priority standards and skills for each course (and ensure they are aligned with school-level Student Learning Objectives, School Improvement Plans, district priorities, etc.).
    b. Common objectives based on these standards and agreement on the evidence of how well the objectives have been met in terms of student learning.
    c. Common ways of measuring student learning – the sources of evidence for each objective (if common assessments do not already exist, teacher teams should work together to create or obtain them). In the first year of implementation, if common assessments do not yet exist, teacher teams may establish a plan to ensure these assessments are purchased or developed and use existing assessments to measure student learning in school year 2011-2012.
    d. If applicable, baselines for each source of evidence by examining prior student learning data or administering a pre-test early in the school year.
    e. Determine what a “rigorous” target is for each objective. A rigorous target is ambitious but attainable in terms of achieving or making progress towards proficiency on the standards.

Approving Student Learning Objectives

Criteria for Acceptable Student Learning Objectives

In order for an evaluator to approve a Student Learning Objective, it must be rated as acceptable on three criteria:

1. **Priority of Content**: is the objective focused on content that is aligned to important curriculum targets that capture majority of the instructional period?
2. **Rigor of Target**: Does the numerical target represent an appropriate amount of student learning for the specified interval of instruction?
3. **Quality of Evidence**: Will the evidence source(s) allow for clear, accurate measurement of student learning?



Priority of Content:

The Student Learning Objective should align to state Grade Level and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs and GLEs) and/or the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or other content standards for subjects that do not have state standards. In most cases, the objective should cover all standards that the teacher plans to teach throughout the interval of instruction (which must represent a significant portion of the instructional period). If the school or district has made particular standards a priority for instruction, those standards may be the focus of the Student Learning Objective(s).

If met, the Student Learning Objective should provide students with essential knowledge and skills that are necessary for success in the next grade or level of instruction.

Rigor of Target:

Student Learning Objective targets should represent an appropriate level of stretch for the student population—a goal that is challenging, yet attainable. There are several additional sources criteria educators may use to benchmark how challenging a Student Learning Objective is:

- Whether or not the target reflects adequate progress toward proficiency in the content area assessed

- How difficult it is for the current students to make significant progress towards the target during the interval of instruction
- How difficult it is for students to make significant progress towards the goal, both in the current year and in the past (comparisons could be made to other similar students, to all students, and to students who have been recognized for exceeding the standard for the Student Learning Objective)
- Some educators may be provided with a numeric growth target on a summative assessment, generated automatically by analysis of prior test results (e.g. off-the-shelf assessments that report standard benchmark scores). Such commercially generated targets should be used with caution until validated locally.

Quality of Evidence:

All assessments used for Student Learning Objectives should be approved by the evaluator (or district-wide) during/prior to the Beginning-of-Year Conference (or district-wide) using the criteria below. Individual objectives may require more than one source of evidence. If a common assessment is available that is appropriate for a Student Learning Objective, it must be used. A common assessment need only be approved once, unless the assessment changes significantly from its originally approved form. *If the objective will be measured using a school-based assessment, i.e., one that is not used by teachers outside of the school*, the assessment and scoring tool must be reviewed by the evaluator using the following criteria:

Content	▪ Do items align to the scope of RI/district/school-approved standards, curriculum and content/skills for the course? ▪ Would mastering this content be a "big win" for students learning this subject at this grade-level? ▪ Will the content and skills assessed by the items provide students with knowledge and skills that are (1) essential for success in the next grade/course or in subsequent fields of study; or (2) otherwise of high value beyond the course? ▪ (Where appropriate): Do the items measure students' attainment of individualized IEP goals?
Rigor	▪ Are the items appropriately challenging (e.g., right level of Bloom's Taxonomy, Webb's cognitive complexity)? ▪ Do items require appropriate critical thinking and application? ▪ Are there some items that are at a level of difficultly that only a few students will get them correct (stretch)? ▪ Do multiple choice items include answer choices that make the questions rigorous (more than one choice is plausible)? ▪ Does the set of reading and language items go beyond fluency, decoding, and basic comprehension to address relevant standards, including critical comprehension and inferential thinking in all content areas? Do reading and language items require ambitious but feasible reading levels? ▪ At HS level, are items designed at the bars that students will see in entrance and certification exams (e.g., SAT)?
Format	▪ Are items designed such that wrong answers will identify students' levels of knowledge/mastery?

Timing of Results Availability	▪ When will results be made available to the educator? (Externally-scored assessments should make results available to the evaluator and teacher prior to the end of the year). For instance, a teacher of an Advanced Placement course would not receive their results until July; accordingly, an AP teacher may administer a previously released AP exam as their summative assessment and score it using the College Board's scoring guide.
Fairness	▪ Are the items free from words and knowledge that are idiosyncratic to particular ethnicities, subcultures, and genders? ▪ Are appropriate accommodations available and provided to students as needed?
Scoring	▪ Do open-ended questions have rubrics that (1) clearly articulate what students are expected to know and (2) differentiate between levels of knowledge/mastery? ▪ Does scoring give appropriate weight to the essential aspects?

Revisiting and Revising Student Learning Objectives

Revisiting Student Learning Objectives Mid-Year

During the middle of the year, the educator and evaluator will check-in regarding the educator's progress toward their Student Learning Objectives. Prior to any discussion, the evaluator will review the student learning data pertaining to the educator's Student Learning Objectives, as well as their notes from the approval process earlier in the year and any changes in the student composition of the classroom or school. This review of student learning data may be focused on formative results, as some data sources may not yet be available.

Evaluators will not assign ratings to Student Learning Objectives mid-year. The purpose of this review of student learning data is to add context to the educator's observed performance and enhance discussion of instructional strengths and areas for improvement as they pertain to student learning. The evaluator should ask questions that will help him/her gauge the current level of student learning, such as:

- How are your students progressing toward your Student Learning Objectives? How do you know?
- Which students are struggling/exceeding expectations? What are you doing to support them?
- What additional resources do you need to support you as you work to achieve your Student Learning Objectives?

The evaluator's review of student learning prior to the mid-year review also allows the evaluator to get to know the educator's methods of monitoring and assessing student progress, and will inform any decision to revise the educator's Student Learning Objectives.

Revising Student Learning Objectives

The mid-year review presents an opportunity to revise Student Learning Objectives if it becomes clear that they can be improved. At the mid-year review, the educator and evaluator will review available student learning data and reexamine the Student Learning Objectives to determine if adjustments should be made. Adjustments may be made if:

- Objectives have already been met and/or are not sufficiently ambitious.
- Objectives are too ambitious.
- Based on new data collected since they were set, objectives fail to address the most important learning challenges in the classroom/school.
- New, more reliable data sources are available.
- Class compositions or teaching schedule have changed significantly.

The standards, targets, and/or the assessments in a Student Learning Objective may all be adjusted.

Timeline for revising Student Learning Objectives:

- At least 48 hours (2 school days) prior to the mid-year review: Educator shares student learning data to date with evaluator.
- At mid-year review: Educator and evaluator discuss Student Learning Objectives.
- Within 48 hours (2 school days) following mid-year review: Educator revises Student Learning Objectives and sends to evaluator. Evaluator approves changes as discussed, or continues to work with educator to refine objectives.
- By mid-February: All Student Learning Objectives should be "locked" (no more changes made).

Teachers of semester-long courses should make any necessary revisions to their Student Learning Objectives by the midway point of the semester.

Scoring Student Learning Objectives

At the end of the year, the evaluator should review results on the evidence sources (can be compiled data or the assessments/artifacts themselves) specified in the Student Learning Objectives, and determine the extent to which each objective was met. Evaluators will rate each individual objective as Did Not Meet, Met, or Exceeded.

After rating each objective individually, the evaluator will make a holistic judgment about the teacher's overall impact on student learning. Using the Student Learning Objective Scoring Guidelines on the following page, evaluators will look at the whole body of evidence across all Student Learning Objectives

and assign the teacher an overall rating. When the results do not clearly indicate an overall rating, evaluators should draw on their expertise and use their own judgment.

Guidelines for Scoring Student Learning Objectives

After rating each Student Learning Objective individually, evaluators will select one of the categories below that best describes the teacher's overall attainment of the objectives:

Exceptional Attainment of Objectives

Evidence across all Student Learning Objectives indicates exceptional student mastery or progress. All objectives are exceeded. This category is reserved for the educator who has surpassed expectations described in their Student Learning Objectives and/or demonstrated an outstanding impact on student learning.

Full Attainment of Objectives

Evidence across all Student Learning Objectives indicates superior student mastery or progress. All objectives are met. This category applies to the educator who has fully achieved the expectations described in their Student Learning Objectives and/or demonstrated a notable impact on student learning.

Considerable Attainment of Objectives

Evidence across all Student Learning Objectives indicates significant student mastery or progress. Most objectives are met. If an objective is not met, evidence indicates that it was nearly met. This category applies to the educator who overall has nearly met the majority of the expectations described in their Student Learning Objectives and/or who has demonstrated a considerable impact on student learning.

Partial Attainment of Objectives

Evidence across all Student Learning Objectives indicates some student mastery or progress. Educator may have met or exceeded some objectives and not met other objectives. Educator may have nearly met all objectives. This category applies to the educator who has demonstrated an impact on student learning, but overall has not met the expectations described in their Student Learning Objectives.

Minimal or No Attainment of Objectives

Evidence across all Student Learning Objectives indicates little student mastery or progress. Most or all objectives are not met. This category applies to the educator who has not met the expectations described in their Student Learning Objectives and has not demonstrated a sufficient impact on student learning. This category also applies when evidence of objectives is missing, incomplete, or unreliable or when the educator has not engaged in the process of setting and gathering evidence for Student Learning Objectives.

Student Learning Objectives Timeline and Checklist

Beginning-of-year Student Learning Objective approval:
Review and approve each teacher's draft Student Learning Objectives.

Prior to the beginning-of-year Student Learning Objective approval:

The teacher should:

- ☐ Collect and analyze relevant student learning data.
- ☐ Meet with other teachers of the same course or grade level (if applicable) to review standards, select or create assessments, and draft course-level Student Learning Objectives.
- ☐ Complete the Student Learning Objective Form for his or her own classes.
    - If a teacher-created assessment is being used for the Student Learning Objectives, a copy of the assessment and any relevant scoring guide/rubric should be provided to the evaluator.
- ☐ Provide copies of the above to the evaluator at least 48 hours in advance of any discussion (2 school days).

The **evaluator** should:

- ☐ If possible, meet with course teams as they plan their Student Learning Objectives.
- ☐ Review the teacher's Student Learning Objectives and any relevant student learning data
- ☐ If a teacher-created or teacher-obtained assessment is being used, review the assessment and scoring tool.
- ☐ Share the administrative team's SLOs

During beginning-of-year Student Learning Objective Approval:

1. Review and discuss the relevant student learning data and Student Learning Objectives.
    a. If necessary, make any adjustments to the Student Learning Objectives.
2. If changes do not need to be made to the Student Learning Objectives, the evaluator may approve both by signing each document.
3. Establish clear next steps for the evaluator and teacher after the approval.

***After the beginning-of-year Student Learning Objective approval*:**

- ☐ **If any significant changes needed to be made to Student Learning Objectives, those changes should be made by the teacher and the revised forms returned to the evaluator within two weeks for approval. The evaluator should review them immediately and approve the changes if they are acceptable.**

Mid-year review:
Review student learning data supplied by the teacher, revise Student Learning Objectives if necessary.

Prior to the mid-year review:

The teacher should:

☐ **Collect all interim student learning data related to the sources of evidence for Student Learning Objectives and submit this data to the evaluator 48 hours before the review (2 school days).**

The evaluator should:

☐ Examine all available student learning data and determine if any changes are necessary to Student Learning Objectives.

During the mid-year review:

Review all available student learning data and reexamine the Student Learning Objectives and determine if adjustments should be made. Adjustments may be made if:

- Objectives have already been met and/or are not sufficiently ambitious.
- Objectives are too ambitious.
- Based on data collected since they were set, objectives do not sufficiently address the most important learning challenges in the classroom/school.
- New, more reliable data or sources of evidence are available.
- Class compositions or teaching schedules have changed significantly.

After the mid-year review:

☐ If any revisions needed to be made to Student Learning Objectives, those changes should be made by the teacher and the revised forms returned to the evaluator within 48 hours (2 school days) for approval. The evaluator should review them immediately and approve the changes if they are acceptable.

All student learning objectives should be "locked" (no more additional changes made) by mid-February.

End-of-year Scoring:
Review student learning data, including the results of summative assessments, and determine scores for Student Learning Objectives.

Prior to end-of-year scoring:

The teacher should:

- ☐ **Collect all student learning data related to the sources of evidence for Student Learning Objectives and record this data on the Student Learning Objective Form.**
- ☐ **Submit any remaining additional student learning evidence (e.g., class sets of graded student assessments).**
- ☐ **Submit any written context necessary for evaluator's review of evidence.**
- ☐ **Submit the final Student Learning Objective Form 48 hours before the end-of-year scoring (2 school days).**

The **evaluator** should:

- ☐ Examine all available student learning data and determine the extent to which each objective was met.
- ☐ Determine the overall Student Learning Objective score that best describes the learning of the teacher's students, using the Student Learning Objective Scoring Guidelines.

During end-of-year scoring:

1. Review and discuss the student learning data and attainment of objectives.
2. Evaluator has a chance to ask any outstanding questions about student learning data.

***After end-of-year scoring*:**

- ☐ **Evaluator finalizes overall Student Learning Objective score and shares with teacher, along with any rationale and summative feedback.**
- ☐ **Evaluator follows district guidelines/protocols for reporting teacher evaluation ratings.**

Student Learning Objectives and Educator Evaluation

Roles of the SEA and LEAs in the Student Learning Objectives Process

The Student Learning Objective process described in this framework will be used statewide in teacher and building administrator evaluation. The protocol for how objectives are set, monitored, and scored is determined by RIDE. LEAs have flexibility in which assessments they use in various grades and subjects, and the local common scoring rubrics they use to measure student performance on those assessments. LEAs also have flexibility in determining who exactly will serve as an evaluator based on local context and contractual agreements.

Student Learning Objective Support

RIDE will provide training to evaluators on how to approve, monitor, and score Student Learning Objectives. RIDE will also provide direct guidance to teachers and administrators on how to set and monitor Student Learning Objectives, including a series of exemplar Student Learning Objectives for various grades and subjects, to be released at the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year. These will serve as additional guidance for full implementation in the 2012-2013 school year.

In addition, RIDE is in the process of building an Instructional Management System (IMS) — an online platform that will house data, curriculum, and assessment materials. The IMS, when complete, will facilitate the Student Learning Objective process by making it easier for teachers and administrators to access common assessments and the data they need to make informed decisions.

Finally, RIDE is also in the process of building a computer-based system to store and manage all quantitative and qualitative educator evaluation data. The Educator Performance and Support System (EPSS) will be available for the 2012-2013 school year. This system will provide an easy-to-use interface to collect and manage data on all three components of the Evaluation System – Student Learning, Professional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. In addition, EPSS will allow users to manage activities related to the evaluation process such as scheduling observations and conferences, two-way communication between evaluators and educators, as well as tools for self-assessment and observations.

Supporting Materials

A. Student Learning Objective – Teacher Form (page 37): This form is used by teachers to set their Student Learning Objectives prior to the beginning-of-year approval. They will also use it to record the results of their evidence prior to the end-of-year scoring. Evaluators will use the form to review the evidence and assign an initial rating for each individual Student Learning Objective.

B. Teacher Guidance (page 39): This document is used by teachers as they set their Student Learning Objectives. It explains the principles that should guide their decisions regarding the *Content* on which they should focus, the *Students* to whom the objective applies, the *Target* that they set for

each piece of *Evidence*, and their plans for *Administration and Scoring*. It also explains how their Student Learning Objectives will be scored by the evaluator.

C. Student Learning Objective – Administrator Form (page 41): This form is used by administrators to set their Student Learning Objectives prior to the beginning-of-year approval. They will also use it to record the results of their evidence prior to the end-of-year scoring. Evaluators will use the form to review the evidence and assign an initial rating for each individual Student Learning Objective.

D. Administrator Guidance (page 43): The counterpart to the Teacher Companion described above, customized for administrators.

E. Frequently Asked Questions about Student Learning Objectives for Teachers (page 45): This FAQ is designed to answer a few of the most commonly asked questions related to teacher's Student Learning Objectives.

F. Exemplars (page 49): Sample sets of Student Learning Objectives are included to demonstrate the relevance of content, rigor of target, and quality of evidence that RIDE considers appropriate. Additional exemplars for other grades and content areas will be made available online at http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/StudentLearningObjectives.aspx

The Rhode Island Growth Model

In addition to Student Learning Objectives designed by the educator and evaluator as part of the development and evaluation process, teachers who are responsible for student learning in ELA or mathematics in grades 3-7 and building administrators in schools with students in grades 3-7 will also be evaluated on their students' growth on the NECAP ELA and mathematics assessments, as compared to students with a similar academic score history.[7] Growth model scores will not be available until the 2012-2013 school year. These scores will be generated by the Rhode Island Growth Model (RIGM) and supplied to evaluators by the Rhode Island Department of Education.

The evaluator will insert a teacher's growth model score (and a school-wide growth score for building administrators) into the Student Learning matrix to calculate the educator's Student Learning ratings, as described in the **Scoring Measures of Student Learning** section beginning on page 31.

More information on the Rhode Island Growth Model is available at:
http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/RIGM.aspx.

[7] Similar academic score histories refer to students who have a similar NECAP score history, regardless of student demographic data or program information (e.g. race, ethnicity, SES, IEP, LEP).

How Are Student Growth Model Results Calculated?

Two consecutive data points (e.g., a student's test scores from his/her grade 4 and grade 5 NECAP math tests) are needed for the RIGM. Each student's growth is compared to that of his or her *academic peers*. Academic peers are defined as all students **statewide** with a similar NECAP score history, regardless of student demographics or program information (e.g., race/ethnicity, SES, IEP, LEP). The student's growth is measured as a percentile from 1-99, with higher values indicating more growth relative to academic peers. For example, a student with a **Student Growth Percentile (SGP)** of 90 showed more growth than 90% of his or her academic peers. With the RIGM, a student can have a high SGP even when performance is not yet at a proficient level.

How Are Administrator and Teacher Scores Calculated?

For a group of students (e.g., in a classroom or school), SGP data can will be aggregated (summarized) to determine the median SGP of the group of students. To do so, all tested students' SGPs are arranged in order (e.g., 1-99) to determine the median SGP, which is most representative of the school. The median SGP is the point at which half of the students' SGPs are above and half are below. For example, the median SGP in the sample roster below would be 42.

Student	SGP	
Emily	5	
Peter	27	
Sam	42	← Median SGP
Elizabeth	51	
Alex	60	

Scoring Measures of Student Learning

Building administrator and teacher Student Learning Objectives will be scored using the same methodology and guidelines. For educators with growth model ratings, the Student Learning Objective rating will be combined with their growth model rating to determine their overall student learning score. An example of how this works can be found in step three of the following section, **Combining Student Learning Scores**.

Scoring Student Learning Objectives

At the end-of-year scoring the evaluator should review results on the evidence sources (can be compiled data or the assessment/artifacts themselves) specified in the Student Learning Objectives, determining the extent to which each individual objective was met. Evaluators will rate each objective as Did Not Meet, Met, or Exceeded.

After rating each objective individually, the evaluator will make a holistic judgment about the educator's overall impact on student learning. Using the Student Learning Objectives Guidelines below, evaluators will look at the whole body of evidence across all Student Learning Objectives and assign the educator an overall rating. When the results do not clearly indicate an overall rating, evaluators should draw on their expertise and use their own judgment.

Guidelines for Scoring Student Learning Objectives

After examining each Student Learning Objective individually, evaluators will select one of the categories that best describes the educator's overall attainment of the objectives from the table on page 21.

Combining Student Learning Scores

Student learning scores for all educators will be calculated using a matrix. Evaluators will follow these steps:

- **Step 1: Determine a Student Learning Objective Score**

  Rate the educator's Student Learning Objectives, using the instructions and guidelines from the preceding section.

- **Step 2: Determine Rhode Island Growth Model Score** (when applicable)
  Beginning in 2012-2013, school-level administrators and teachers serving NECAP-tested students in grades 3-7 and subjects (ELA and mathematics) will receive a growth model score of "Low Growth," "Typical Growth," or "High Growth." In year one of implementation, the Student Learning Objective rating will be the only component of the overall Student Learning Score.

- **Step 3: Combine Student Learning Objective Score and Growth Model Score to form overall Student Learning Score**

  Where applicable, the Student Learning Objective rating will be combined with a Rhode Island Growth Model score using the matrix pictured below. For example, if an educator received a Student Learning Objective rating of "Full Attainment" and a Growth Model rating of "Typical Growth", these two ratings would combine to produce an overall Student Learning score of 4. (For teachers without a Rhode Island Growth Model score, their Student Learning Objective rating will be their overall Student Learning score.)

Student Learning Matrix

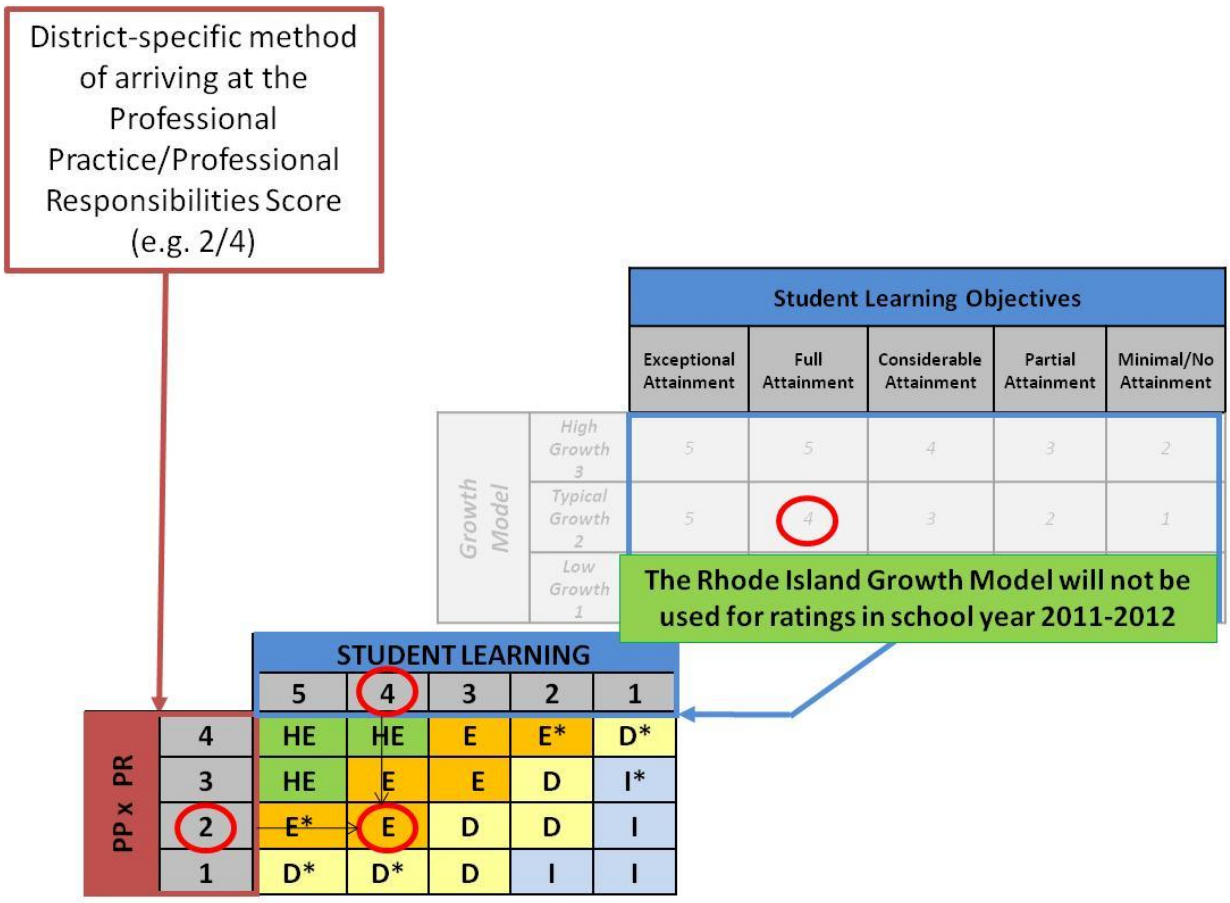
Growth Model	Student Learning Objectives: Exceptional Attainment	Full Attainment	Considerable Attainment	Partial Attainment	Minimal/No Attainment
High Growth	5	5	4	3	2
Typical Growth	5	4	3	2	1
Low Growth					

The Rhode Island Growth Model will not be used for ratings in school year 2011-2012

➢ **Step 4: Determine Final Effectiveness Rating**

Depending on the model being used, a specific process will be used to determine an educator's Professional Practice and Professional Responsibilities score. This score and the Student Learning score will be combined in the matrix pictured below to establish the final effectiveness rating. In this example, the educator received a Student Learning score of 4 and a Professional Practice and Professional Responsibilities score of 2, which result in a final effectiveness rating of "Effective."

Calculating the Final Effectiveness Rating



Key

H = Highly Effective
E = Effective
D = Developing
I = Ineffective

* Ratings in any of these cells of the matrix will trigger an automatic review.

APPENDIX

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: TEACHER FORM

Name: _____
Content Area: _____ Grade Level: _____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

Aligned Standards: *(To which RI/national standards (GSEs, GLEs, CCSS) does this objective align?)*

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)*

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

Approval of Objective: *Evaluator should rate the Student Learning Objective in the following categories. Objectives rated as Unacceptable in any category should be revised and resubmitted.*

	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Priority of Content	☐	☐
Rigor of Target	☐	☐
Quality of Evidence	☐	☐

Once the above information has been discussed and agreed upon by the teacher and evaluator, please sign below.

Teacher _____

Evaluator _____

Date _____

Results: *(Teacher should explain evidence of student learning. How many targets were met? To what degree were targets met? Additional score reports may be attached to describe results.)*

Scoring: *(Evaluator should check the box that best indicates the teacher's attainment of this student learning objective. Individual ratings should serve as the basis for an overall rating using the holistic rubric.)*

Did the teacher meet this objective?	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeded
	☐	☐	☐

NOTES

Student Learning Objectives – Teacher Guidance	
Statement of Objective	This is a long-term academic goal for students. It should be specific and measureable, based on available prior student learning data, and aligned to state standards(or for subjects where state standards do not exist, other recognized standards, e.g., standards from content groups like the National Council of Teacher of Mathematics). It should represent the most important learning during the interval of instruction. Objectives may be based on progress or mastery. Objectives based on progress must include a baseline for each target. Objectives based on mastery may, but are not required to, include a baseline for each target.
Rationale	The rationale is the explanation for why this particular objective was chosen. The teacher should explain why this particular objective is an appropriate area of focus.
Aligned Standards	The Student Learning Objective should align to state Grade Level and Grade Span Expectations (GSEs and GLEs) and/or the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Objectives may be broad and aligned to many standards or they may be narrower and aligned to just a few, if the rationale justifies this focus. If the school or district has made particular standards a priority for instruction, those standards should be addressed by the Student Learning Objective(s).
Students	The teacher should identify how many students are included in the objective, and from which classes. All students a teacher teaches should be covered by his or her set of objectives (although not necessarily by a single objective). Elementary teachers who teach all content areas should have at least one Student Learning Objective for ELA and one for mathematics. Secondary teachers should have approximately one Student Learning Objective per different course taught, up to four. If a teacher has more than four preps, they should prioritize based on school or district learning priorities. If the school or district has made it a priority to close gaps between particular groups of students, an objective may address these gaps and focus on a subgroup of students. Though individual objectives may focus on a subgroup, the complete set should cover all of a teacher's students.
Interval of Instruction	The interval of instruction refers to the length of time the teacher will spend teaching the content and skills addressed in the objective. The interval of instruction must represent a significant portion of the instructional period. Usually, the interval of instruction will be one school year. If the teacher teaches a course that is not taught year-long (e.g., a semester-long elective course), he or she may select an interval of instruction that better aligns with the school schedule.
Target(s) & Evidence	The target(s) for the objective are numerical goals for each source of evidence used to assess the objective. Targets should be ambitious but attainable. Teachers should begin with the data and historical information they have on current students and use it to set targets for their Student Learning Objectives. Pre-test data, current year classroom assessment data, and/or prior year's grades and assessment data can be used to inform targets. Teachers can use previous classes' performance for the same or other teachers to guide target-setting if data on the current students indicates that the students are academically similar. If previous groups of students are not academically similar, targets may be adjusted accordingly. At least one source of evidence and a corresponding target are required, but multiple sources and targets may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence. If the teacher is not using a common assessment, the evidence and how the evidence will be scored or assessed must be approved by the evaluator at the beginning-of-year approval. The priority of content, rigor of target(s), and quality of evidence should be considered when setting and approving Student Objectives.
Rationale for Target(s)	When selecting targets, the teacher should consider any department, grade level, school-wide or district expectations for progress or mastery, as well as any prior student learning data. If a baseline is available for the students covered in the objective, it should be included. Baselines may be based on pre-tests administered at the beginning of the year, assessments administered at the end of the prior year, or other historical data about student learning.
Administration & Scoring	The teacher should explain how the evidence used to assess the objective will be collected and reviewed. The teacher should include detail about how assessments will be administered and scored. The teacher and evaluator should determine the most accurate, fair, and objective scoring process possible.
Approval of Objective	At the beginning-of-year approval, the evaluator will review each objective in terms of its priority of content, rigor of target, and quality of evidence. Objectives rated as Unacceptable in any category must be revised and resubmitted within ten school days.
Results	At the end of the interval of instruction, the teacher should explain the results of all sources of evidence used to assess the objective. The results should be expressed numerically and in relation to the previously set targets. If any official score reports are available for the sources of evidence used (especially for common assessments) they should be submitted to the evaluator prior to the end-of-year scoring.
Scoring	The evaluator should review all the available evidence related to Student Learning Objectives, noting the degree to which the objective was met on the form. Evaluators will informally rate each objective as Not Met, Met, or Exceeded. The evaluator may provide additional comments about the scoring. These informal ratings will serve as the basis for the holistic scoring. Using the Student Learning Objective scoring guidelines, evaluators will look at the whole body of evidence across all objectives and assign an overall Student Learning Objective rating.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: ADMINISTRATOR FORM

Name: _____
School: _____ Grade Levels:_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

Interval of Instruction: *(Typically one school year unless there is a compelling reason for a shorter interval)*

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-*

test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

Approval of Objective: *Evaluator should rate the Student Learning Objective in the following categories. Objectives rated as Unacceptable in any category should be revised and resubmitted.*

	Unacceptable	Acceptable
Priority of Content	☐	☐
Rigor of Target	☐	☐
Quality of Evidence	☐	☐

Once the above information has been discussed and agreed upon by the teacher and evaluator, please sign below.

Administrator _____

Evaluator _____

Date _____

Results: *(Administrator should explain evidence of student learning. How many targets were met? To what degree were targets met? Additional score reports may be attached to describe results.)*

Scoring: *(Evaluator should check the box that best indicates the teacher's attainment of this student learning objective. Individual ratings should serve as the basis for an overall rating using the holistic rubric.)*

Did the administrator meet this objective?	Did Not Meet	Met	Exceeded
	☐	☐	☐

NOTES

Student Learning Objectives – Administrator Guidance	
Statement of Objective	This is a long-term academic goal for students. It should be specific and measureable, based on available prior student learning data. All administrators in a school will have a common set of 4-6 Student Learning Objectives. At least one objective must pertain to mathematics and one to English Language Arts. Objectives should focus on areas of need identified by state assessment data or the school strategic/improvement plan. Objectives may focus on subgroups of students, closing gaps, or particular grades and subjects. Objectives may focus on direct academic improvement, or on indicators of student learning such as enrollment in advanced level courses. Objectives may be based on progress or mastery. Objectives based on progress must include a baseline for each target. Objectives based on mastery may, but are not required to, include a baseline for each target.
Rationale	The rationale is the explanation for why this particular objective was chosen. The administrator should explain why this particular objective is an appropriate area of focus.
Students	The administrator should identify which students/classes/grades are included in the objective. Unlike teacher objectives, administrator objectives do not have to cover all students for whom the administrator is responsible.
Interval of Instruction	The interval of instruction is typically one school year unless the administrator has a compelling and documented reason for focusing on a shorter period of time.
Target(s) & Evidence	The target(s) for the objective are the numerical goals for each source of evidence used to assess the objective. Administrators should begin with the data and historical information they have on current students and use it to set targets for their Student Learning Objectives. Pre-test data and/or prior year's grades and assessment data can be used to inform targets. Administrators can use previous year's performance to guide target-setting. If previous groups of students are not academically similar, targets may be adjusted accordingly. At least one source of evidence and a corresponding target are required, but multiple sources and targets may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence. If the administrator is not using a common assessment, the evidence and how the evidence will be scored or assessed must be approved by the evaluator at the beginning-of-year approval. Though passing rates may be used as evidence for some objectives, grades should generally not be used as evidence. The priority of content, students, rigor of target(s), and quality of evidence should be considered when setting and approving Student Learning Objectives.
Rationale for Target(s)	When selecting targets, the administrator should consider any department, grade level, school-wide or district expectations for progress or mastery, as well as any prior student learning data. If a baseline is available for the students covered in the objective, it should be included. Baselines may be based on pre-tests administered at the beginning of the year, assessments administered at the end of the prior year, or other historical data about student learning.
Administration & Scoring	The administrator should explain how the evidence used to assess the objective will be collected and reviewed. The administrator should include detail about how assessments will be administered and scored. The administrator and evaluator should determine the most accurate, fair, and objective scoring process possible.
Approval of Objective	Prior to or at beginning-of-year approval, the evaluator will review each objective in terms of its priority of content, rigor of target, and quality of evidence. Objectives rated as Unacceptable in any category must be revised and resubmitted within ten school days.
Results	At the end of the interval of instruction, the administrator should explain the results of all sources of evidence used to assess the objective. The results should be expressed numerically and in relation to the previously set targets. If any official score reports are available for the sources of evidence used (especially for common assessments) they should be submitted to the evaluator prior to the end-of-year scoring.
Scoring	The evaluator should review all the available evidence related to Student Learning Objectives, noting the degree to which the objective was met on the form. Evaluators will informally rate each objective as Not Met, Met, or Exceeded. The evaluator may provide additional comments about the scoring. These informal ratings will serve as the basis for the holistic scoring. Using the Student Learning Objective scoring guidelines, evaluators will look at the whole body of evidence across all Student Learning Objectives and assign an overall Student Learning Objective rating.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Student Learning Objectives for Teachers

How many Student Learning Objectives must be set?

Every teacher should have a set of 2-4 Student Learning Objectives. Elementary teachers who are responsible for multiple content areas should have, at least, one objective for English Language Arts and one objective for mathematics. Secondary teachers should have approximately one objective per prep, up to four. Also, administrator teams should have 4-6 school-wide Student Learning Objectives.

What content should be covered?

Teacher teams should identify the major standards or overarching concepts and skills that are necessary for the successful completion of a course and use them to guide the setting of their objectives. All objectives should be based on Grade Level Expectations (GLEs), Grade Span Expectations (GSEs), or the Common Core State Standards[9]. In many cases, districts or schools will already have identified the most important learning objectives for students in the District and School Improvement plans, along with assessments or other ways of measuring those objectives. In other cases, appropriate Student Learning Objectives and/or ways of measuring them may need to be identified or created. Ideally, this should happen in collaborative grade-level team or content-alike groups. Objectives may be based on student progress or mastery.

What students should the Student Learning Objectives cover?

A teachers' set of objectives should address all students for whom a teacher is responsible. Teachers can set goals for subgroups. In addition, teachers can set tiered goals so that targets are differentiated. Teachers can set targets for a majority of students (80%-95% for example), as long that majority contains a natural distribution of subgroups (students receiving special education services, for example) and no subgroup is disproportionately excluded. Administrators are not required to set Student Learning Objectives that include every student for whom they are responsible. They can focus their objectives on particular grades, subject areas, or populations of students.

What is an appropriate target?

Teachers should begin with the data and historical information they have on current students and use it to set targets for their Student Learning Objectives. Pre-test data and/or prior year's grades and assessment data can be used to inform targets. Teachers can also use previous classes' performance to guide target-setting if data on the current students indicates that they are academically similar. Targets should correspond to at least one year's worth of student learning.

[9] For grades and subjects that are not covered by the Common Core, GSEs or GLEs, Objectives should align to available national standards, perhaps those set forth by professional associations (e.g. National Art Education Association).

The rigor of the target should be considered by the evaluator in the beginning-of-year approval. Targets that are not sufficiently rigorous should not be approved. Evaluator training will include guidance on evaluating rigor. To ensure fairness, teachers with shared objectives should have the same targets for their students, unless evidence indicates that different classes of students have significantly different starting points.

What evidence sources may be used?

Teachers must present at least one source of evidence for each target, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence. Common assessments need not be commercially-purchased assessments. Teachers are encouraged to collaborate with grade-level teams and content-alike groups to obtain or develop common assessments for Student Learning Objectives. If a teacher is not using an externally-created assessment, the evidence (ex. teacher-made exam, student portfolios, writing pieces, etc.) and plans for how the evidence will be scored must be approved by the evaluator in the beginning-of-year approval. Evaluators must consider whether objectives have high-quality sources of evidence when initially approving the objectives. Evaluator training will include guidance on evaluating sources of evidence.

What if teachers don't have access to a common assessment?

Teachers in some grades and subjects do not have access to common district- or third-party-created assessments for their course standards. In these cases, teachers will need to measure student progress toward their Student Learning Objectives by using assessments that they create, in collaboration with other teachers in their school or district who teach the same course. If there is nobody in their school or district who teaches their same course, teachers may select an off-the-shelf assessment or create their own. Prior to use, assessments should be approved a teacher's evaluator.

Teacher teams can build on the summative assessment that they are already using to measure student progress. In future years, teachers will be able to reuse and refine assessments used previously for measuring progress on Student Learning Objectives. In the first year of implementation, however, teachers must use assessments that align to course standards, and/or build on current assessments and are approved by their evaluator. These assessments must be finalized early in the school year, for several reasons:

- Assessments will provide teachers with a goalpost from which to plan backward.
- Assessments will set in stone a bar of student achievement.
- Assessments will be higher-quality if they are carefully constructed in advance.[10]

In order to properly measure student learning for every course and grade level, Rhode Island educators must strive to develop or identify appropriate assessment tools. At the start of the school year, the

[10] It is possible that assessments may change from when they are approved by the evaluator early in the year to when they are administered at the end of the year. Such changes to the assessment must be addressed at the Mid-year review.

principal will meet with content area leaders and teams of teachers in subjects where external assessments are not available, to discuss possible sources of evidence. Teachers of these courses will obtain and/or modify assessments to measure student achievement, (e.g., from their course textbook). Course teams developing assessments are encouraged to collaborate across schools or with district content-area experts.

Prior to the beginning-of-year approval, course teams will share these assessments, along with the accompanying scoring tool(s), with their evaluator for review. As a part of the approval process, the evaluator will provide feedback on the assessment and scoring tool. As the quality of these assessments and scoring tools is central to the meaningful tracking and evaluating of progress on Student Learning Objectives, they must be finalized by teacher and evaluator by the end of October.

The student data used to measure progress do not need to come from a single, end-of-year assessment. Student achievement data on high-quality common summative assessments tracked throughout the year would be an acceptable source of evidence, e.g., for a teacher using standards-based grading.

Where can I find additional exemplars?

Three exemplar sets of Student Learning Objectives are included in this appendix. As they become available, RIDE will post additional exemplars on the Education Evaluation web page at: http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/StudentLearningObjectives.aspx

Exemplar 1a - STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: HS Math

Name: ____HS Math _____
Content Area: __Advanced Placement Calculus_____ Grade Level:____11-12_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

All students will demonstrate mastery of AP course standards (mastery goal).

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

The purpose of the AP course is for students to demonstrate mastery of an introductory college-level course. Even for students who may not be prepared to pass the exam, engaging with rigorous content has been shown to make them more likely to succeed in college.

Aligned Standards: *(To which RI/national standards (GSEs, GLEs, CCSS) does this objective align?)*

CollegeBoard's Course Topic Outline; in order to carry the "Advanced Placement" title, my course syllabus has been approved by the College Board.

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

All *28* students in my Advanced Placement class.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

SY 2011-2012

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Evidence: Because the current AP exam results will not be available until July, my evidence source will be a recent released AP exam provided by the College Board, administered as the students' final exam. Performance on this exam should be predictive of performance on the actual AP exam. **Target**: The class average exam score will be of *54* points out of *108* possible (corresponds to between a 3/5 and 4/5 overall AP score).

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)*

Last year's students, who had an academic profile similar to this year's students, averaged *50* points on their released AP exam. Student scores on the released exam were closely aligned to their actual scores on the official AP exam.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

I will administer the exam over the course of two days just before the students take the official AP exam in May. It will count for 20% of the students' semester grade. I will follow the administration protocol used for the actual AP exam and will grade the exams using the College Board's scoring key, rubrics, and formulas, e.g., subtracting 0.25 points per wrong multiple choice answer.

Exemplar 1b - STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: HS Math

Name: ____HS Math _____
Content Area: __Algebra II_____ Grade Level:____10-12_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

An increased number of students will demonstrate proficiency when creating equations with one or more variables for the purpose of solving problems. This is a mastery objective.

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

The concept of creating equations with one or more variables for the purpose of solving problems is an essential component of the Algebra II curriculum in our district. Previous work in Algebra I focused on working with and manipulating expressions and equations with limited emphasis on creating equations. Algebra II requires student to build on their learning from Algebra I in order to acquire mastery in creating equations in one or more variables for the purpose of solving problems.

Aligned Standards: *(To which RI/national standards (GSEs, GLEs, CCSS) does this objective align?)*

CCSS ACED.1-3

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

All *93* students in three sections of Algebra II.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

SY 2011-2012

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Evidence: Our district uses a common published assessment to measure student achievement in Algebra II. Assessments are administered every quarter electronically and results are available quickly. At the beginning of the year, a diagnostic assessment was administered in order to set appropriate growth targets.
Targets:
Group (1) – Students falling into this category averaged 35% mastery on the items related to creating equations. Each student in this subgroup will increase their percentage of items correct to at least 75%. (17 students total)
Group (2) – Students falling into this category averaged 11% mastery on the items related to creating equations. Each student in this subgroup will increase their percentage of items correct to at least 60%. (51 students total)
Group (3) – Students falling into this category averaged 6% mastery on the items related to creating equations. Each student in this subgroup will increase their percentage of items correct to at least 45%. (25 students total)

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)*

Based on the beginning-of-the-year diagnostic assessment, it became clear that my 93 Algebra II students fall into three distinct categories: (1) Students with a working knowledge of creating equations and demonstrated mastery; (2) Students with little or no knowledge of creating equations, but demonstrated mastery on manipulating expressions and equations; (3) Students with little or no knowledge of creating equations and

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

Assessments are administered online and multiple choice items are scored automatically by the assessment developer's software. Scores are made available immediately following the assessment. Constructed responses are scored by the math department in a timely fashion with rubrics provided by the developer this enabling a final score to be obtained quickly

EXEMPLAR 2a - STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: MS Band

Name: ____MS Band _____
Content Area: __Concert Band_____ Grade Level:____8th Grade_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Students will perform a grade-level piece at a proficient level (mastery goal).

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

The most important student outcome of a successful year in Band is for each student to be able to play the musical pieces we practice at a proficient level.

Aligned Standards: *(To which RI/national standards (GSEs, GLEs, CCSS) does this objective align?)*

GSEs: 9-12 M1-1, M4-1, M4-2

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

All *54* band students.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

SY 2011-2012

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Target & Evidence: Class average of 4.0/5 ("very good") on final piece ("Pirates of the Caribbean", Arr. Michael Sweeney).

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)*

In previous years, 4.0/5 has been an ambitious target (students with similar starting points ended at 3.5 and 3.4 in the previous two years). Baseline: Students averaged 3.2/5 on fall diagnostic performance assessment.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

Performance will be assessed using a rubric adapted from expert band teachers. Students' performance on selected pieces from "Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, Vol. 1" will be evaluated on a scale of 1-5 in Tone Quality, Rhythm, Pitch, Note Accuracy, Dynamics, etc. Student performance will be assessed in small groups in the last month of the course - this will count as the students' final assessment, along with the accompanying written exam.

EXEMPLAR 2b - STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: MS Band

Name: ____MS Band _____
Content Area: __Concert Band_____ Grade Level:____8th Grade_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Students will demonstrate mastery of appropriate music concepts (mastery goal).

Rationale: *(How did you choose this objective? Why is this an appropriate area of focus?)*

In addition to being able to perform appropriate musical pieces, students leaving this course should have a solid understanding of the music concepts that support the pieces we play.

Aligned Standards: *(To which RI/national standards (GSEs, GLEs, CCSS) does this objective align?)*

GSEs: M3-1, M1-1.c

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes?)*

All *54* band students.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

SY 2011-2012

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the interval of instruction? Targets may be tiered to reflect differentiation among students. What evidence are you going to use to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Evidence: Since no externally-created assessment is available for this course, I will be using a written assessment that I created in coordination with band teachers at several other schools, based on several off-the-shelf assessments of music concept mastery. It contains both multiple-choice and constructed response items.
Target: Class average of 80% on the written assessment.

Rationale for Target: *(How was this target chosen? How did you determine that it is a rigorous target? What pre-test or baseline information, if any, informed your decision?)*

On this assessment, 80% represents an acceptable level of mastery. I expect the average of all student scores to reach this level, as some students may exceed it while others may fall short. **Baseline**: Students averaged 74% on teacher-created written diagnostic exam administered at beginning of year, testing similar concepts.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

I will score the exams using the attached grading key, which has rubrics to award partial credit on constructed response items. The written assessment will be administered as the students' final exam, along with the performance assessment.

Exemplar 3a – SCHOOL-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: ADMINISTRATOR

Name: ___*Building Administrator*_____
School: ___*Elementary (K-5)*_____

Statement of Objective: *(Please be sure to specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Increase early literacy rates. (mastery)

Rationale: *(Why have you chosen this objective? Why is this a worthy area of focus?)*

In review of our school's reading assessment data from SY2010-2011, it is evident that many students in Kindergarten and Grade 1 are not reaching proficient levels in phonemic awareness by the end of each year. Therefore, instruction and assessment in phonemic awareness must be a priority within Kindergarten and Grade 1. By identifying students who are below proficiency in phonemic awareness at the beginning of the year, we will be able to more clearly articulate the instructional needs for all students in the area of phonemic awareness.

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes or grades?)*

All students in grades K-1. (231 students based on next year's projections)

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

The interval of instruction is the entire 2011-2012 school year.

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the time interval? How are you going to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Using the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) Assessment, which is administered three times per year (fall, winter and spring) in accordance with our district's comprehensive assessment system students will demonstrate the following progress: All kindergarten students will attain a score of 25 sounds per minute on the Initial Sounds Fluency (ISF) during the winter administration or grow at least 12 sounds at each district administration (winter and spring) or reach 25 sounds per minute by the end of the school year; all first grade students will attain a score of 35 sounds per minute on the Phonemic Segmentation Fluency (PSF) during the winter administration or grow at least 18 sounds at each district administration (winter and spring) or reach 35 sounds per minute by the end of the school year.

Rationale for Target: *(Why was this target chosen? How do you know it is an appropriate target? What pre-test or baseline information/data, if any, is available for this objective for the student population?)*

These targets were chosen such that if a student is scoring in the "at risk or deficit" category at the beginning of the year and grows at least the number of points for the corresponding grade level target, he or she will reach the "low risk" category by the end of the year. In past years, our district has found a strong correlation between kindergarten and first grade students scoring at the established level in phonemic awareness and their ability to reach proficiency on the alphabetic principle and early reading success.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

The DIBELS literacy assessments are administered three times (in the fall, winter and spring) by each teacher, using the standard time requirements and administration rules. Students may receive accommodations per their IEP. Assessments are scored in-house by the teacher administering the assessment, in accordance with DIBELS administration guidelines. (It should be noted that the DIBELS assessment maybe administered more frequently if teachers would like to monitor students more closely throughout the instruction year.)

Exemplar 3b – SCHOOL-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: ADMINISTRATOR

Name: ___*Building Administrator*_____
School: ___*Elementary (K-5)*_____

Student Learning Objective: *(Please be sure to specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Increase the number of students at each grade level who demonstrate grade level proficiency in mathematics. (mastery/progress)

Rationale: *(Why have you chosen this objective? Why is this a worthy area of focus?)*

On the most recent NECAP assessment (2010-2011), 44% of students in grade 3, 47% of students in grade 4, and 40% of students in grade 5 were proficient in math. Our school improvement action plan calls for a 5% increase in the number of students scoring proficient on the NECAP assessment next school year. As a result of district priorities, common assessments for math which mimic the NECAP format and rigor are being developed by a central team of teachers and curriculum experts for all students in grades 2-5. The use of these assessments is part of our school improvement plan and will allow us to compare results across schools within our district.

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes or grades?)*

All students in grades K-2. (194 students based on next year's projections)

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

The interval of instruction is the entire 2011-2012 school year.

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the time interval? How are you going to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Using the district-developed common mathematics assessment, administered three times a year (end of Q2, end of Q3 and end of Q4) 50% of students in grade 2 will reach proficiency, 50% of students in grade 3, 50% of students in grade 4, and 52% of students in grade 5.

Rationale for Target: *(Why was this target chosen? How do you know it is an appropriate target? What pre-test or baseline information/data, if any, is available for this objective for the student population?)*

In keeping with the school improvement plan, these targets represent at least a 5% increase from last year's proficiency rates in grades 3-5. The 5% increase is in line with the district's goal of an overall 10% increase in 3 years.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

The district-developed common mathematics assessments are developed by a central team of teachers and curriculum experts and administered three times (at the end of Q2, Q3 and Q4) by each teacher, using the district-developed standard time requirements. Students may receive testing accommodations per their IEP. Assessments are scored centrally by content specialists and teachers across the district with results reported within three weeks of administration.

Exemplar 3c - SCHOOL-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: ADMINISTRATOR

Name: ___*Building Administrator*_____
School: ___*Elementary (K-5)*_____

Student Learning Objective: *(Please be sure to specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Reduce the achievement gap in reading between the general education students and students receiving special education services. (progress)

Rationale: *(Why have you chosen this objective? Why is this a worthy area of focus?)*

One of our School Improvement Plan goals focuses on closing achievement gaps between general education students and students receiving special education services. According to our most recent NECAP data, the gap scores between the general education and special education population is the largest gap between subgroups in grades 3-5. In grade three, the proficiency gap is 27% (63% and 38%), 29% in grade four (69% and 40%), and 32% in grade five (78% and 46%). While a proficiency gap exists in math as well, it is not as large and does not persist through grade 5 (the gap narrows in math from year to year while it widens from year to year in reading).

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes or grades?)*

This objective applies to 34 students receiving special education services in grades 3-5.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

The interval of instruction is the entire 2011-2012 school year.

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the time interval? How are you going to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

It is expected that we will see an improvement of 2 reading levels between the reading levels of students receiving special educational services and the general education students (through 3rd grade). I will measure the gap using the average fall DRA2 levels of general education students compared to students receiving special education services and compare them to spring DRA2 levels for the same subgroups and grade levels.

Rationale for Target: *(Why was this target chosen? How do you know it is an appropriate target? What pre-test or baseline information/data, if any, is available for this objective for the student population?)*

Our past DRA2 performance has shown that our special education students on average have not grown more than 1 reading level each year. Therefore, we have set the target of student gain as a minimum of 2 reading levels. We expect the average end of year DRA2 level for 3rd grade special education students to be a 20 and the average end of year DRA2 level for 3rd grade general education students to be a 38. Similar gaps exist for grades 4 and 5. If at a minimum students improve 2 reading levels and the gap closure trend continues over the next five years, the special education and general education gap will be closed in four years. (It should be noted that when completing this analysis the structure of the DRA2 levels beyond Grade 3 will be taken into account as the DRA2 Levels in grades 4-8 include just one level per grade.)

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

The DRA2 is administered school-wide by classroom teachers in the fall and again in the spring (with an opportunity for a 3rd administration if desired). Assessments are scored by the teachers who administer the assessment and all scores are reported to the administration.

Exemplar 3d - SCHOOL-WIDE STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVE: ADMINISTRATOR

Name: ___*Building Administrator*_____
School: ___*Elementary (K-5)*_____

Student Learning Objective: *(Please be sure to specify whether this is a mastery or progress objective.)*

Increase 4th grade proficiency in science. (mastery)

Rationale: *(Why have you chosen this objective? Why is this a worthy area of focus?)*

One of our district initiatives is to increase science proficiency rates to be at or better the state averages. According to our most recent NECAP data (2009-2010), 35% of our 4th graders demonstrated proficiency, while the state average was 44%.

Students: *(Which students will this objective address? How many? From which classes or grades?)*

This objective applies to all 73 students in the 4th grade.

Interval of Instruction: *(Quarters, trimesters, semesters, or one school year?)*

The interval of instruction is the entire 2011-2012 school year.

Target(s) & Evidence: *(Where do you expect this population of students to be at the end of the time interval? How are you going to measure student learning? At least one source of evidence is required, but multiple sources may be used. If a common assessment exists, it must be used as the primary source of evidence.)*

Using the common Unit of Study assessment administered to all 4th grade students, I expect 100% of our students to demonstrate proficiency on 5 of the 8 unit of study assessments.

In addition, 40% of students will demonstrate mastery on each quarterly off-the-shelf interim assessment in science.

Rationale for Target: *(Why was this target chosen? How do you know it is an appropriate target? What pre-test or baseline information/data, if any, is available for this objective for the student population?)*

While this is only the third year using the district science assessment, we have seen a strong correlation between proficiency levels on the district assessment and NECAP proficiency levels. If we increase proficiency by 5% from the previous year and then another 5% the following year, we will be on track for surpassing the state average by the end of school year 2012-2013.

Administration & Scoring: *(How will assessments be administered? How will assessments be scored?)*

Common Unit of Study assessments and interim assessments are administered and scored by the students' classroom teachers in teams. All scores are reported to the building principal as well a district curriculum coordinator.

DISCLAIMER: The contents of this guide were developed under a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.